

Message Text

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SUBJECT: BRIEFING ON MEETINGS WITH GROMYKO

1. YOU MAY BRIEF NAC AS FOLLOWS ON THE US BILATERAL MEETINGS WITH GROMYKO.

2. AS HAS BECOME CUSTOMARY EACH YEAR AT THE TIME OF THE UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY, THE PRESIDENT RECEIVED SOVIET FOREIGN MINISTER GROMYKO AT THE WHITE HOUSE ON SEPTEMBER 18. SECRETARY KISSINGER HELD FURTHER DISCUSSIONS WITH GROMYKO THE NEXT DAY AND HOSTED A DINNER FOR HIM THAT EVENING. GROMYKO RECIPROCATED BY HOSTING A DINNER FOR THE SECRETARY IN NEW YORK ON SEPTEMBER 21. THESE DISCUSSIONS, AS A WHOLE, WERE DEVOTED TO THE OVER-ALL STATE OF US-SOVIET RELATIONS, SALT, AND VARIOUS INTERNATIONAL TOPICS INCLUDING THE MIDDLE EAST.

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3. GROMYKO STRESSED CONTINUED SOVIET ADHERENCE TO DETENTE

AND IMPROVED RELATIONS AS ESTABLISHED AT US-SOVIET SUMMIT MEETINGS. HOWEVER, HE AGAIN COMPLAINED OF STATEMENTS BY CERTAIN UNIDENTIFIED PERSONS WHICH DENIGRATED SOVIET INTENTIONS. UPON BEING ASSURED THAT US POLICY TOWARD THE SOVIET UNION HAD NOT CHANGED, HE DID NOT PURSUE THE MATTER FURTHER. WHILE HIS COMPLAINTS SEEM TO HAVE BEEN MADE LARGELY FOR THE RECORD, THEY CONTINUED TO BETRAY SOVIET SENSITIVITY OVER CRITICISM OF SOVIET ATTITUDES AND POLICIES.....

4. ON SALT, THERE WAS ADDITIONAL CLARIFICATION BY THE SIDES OF REMAINING POINTS AT ISSUE, IN PARTICULAR THE PROBLEMS OF CRUISE MISSILES, "BACKFIRE," AND DEFINITION OF A HEAVY MISSILE. THE QUESTIONS OF NON-TRANSFER AND NON-CIRCUMVENTION WERE NOT DISCUSSED AND ALL SUBSTANTIVE ASPECTS OF SALT IN AMBASSADOR JOHNSON'S PRESENTATION OF SEPTEMBER 12 TO THE COUNCIL REMAIN CURRENT.

5. MBFR CAME UP BRIEFLY. GROMYKO COMPLAINED OVER THE LACK OF PROGRESS AND ARGUED THAT WESTERN DEMANDS -- ESPECIALLY FOR WITHDRAWAL OF SOVIET TANKS -- WERE UNJUST. HE DID NOT GET INTO SPECIFICS, HOWEVER, AND, IN ADDITION TO HIS RATHER CAUSTIC REMARKS, EXPRESSED THE HOPE THAT BOTH SIDES WOULD MAKE EFFORTS FOR SUCCESS OF THE TALKS.

6. IN A BRIEF ALLUSION TO CSCE, GROMYKO EXPRESSED THE SATISFACTION OF THE SOVIET LEADERSHIP AND BREZHNEV PERSONALLY OVER THE HELSINKI CONFERENCE. SPECIFIC ISSUES CONNECTED WITH IMPLEMENTATION AND FOLLOW-UP DID NOT ARISE, THOUGH MEMBERS OF GROMYKO'S PARTY WERE INFORMED OF OUR PLANNED APPROACH TO THE SOVIET FOREIGN MINISTRY (SECTO 14005).

7. GROMYKO MADE A STANDARD COMPLAINT ABOUT THE CONTINUED ARMS RACE, AND, IN THIS CONNECTION, MADE A PITCH FOR THE WORLD DISARMAMENT CONFERENCE, STRESSING THAT IT WOULD INCLUDE PARTICIPATION OF ALL NUCLEAR POWERS. HE ADMITTED THAT SUCH A CONFERENCE WOULD NOT ACHIEVE IMMEDIATE AGREEMENT; BUT ARGUED THAT AT LEAST THE PROBLEM OF WEAPONS PROLIFERATION WOULD BE DISCUSSED BY ALL CONCERNED STATES. GROMYKO ELABORATED SLIGHTLY ON THE SOVIET PROPOSAL FOR

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A BAN ON DEVELOPMENT AND MANUFACTURE OF NEW TYPES OF MASS DESTRUCTION WEAPONS, SAYING THAT THE SOVIETS HAD IN MIND NEW SYSTEMS OF WEAPONS. HE DID NOT RESPOND TO THE SECRETARY'S INQUIRY WHETHER THIS MEANT "NEW" FOR A GIVEN COUNTRY OR "NEW" IN TERMS OF ALL SYSTEMS ALREADY EXTANT IN THE WORLD. IN GENERAL, HE WAS NON-COMMITTAL AND RATHER EVASIVE ON THE SOVIET INITIATIVE, HOLDING TO THE STANDARD LINE THAT FURTHER DETAILS WOULD BE PROVIDED

WHEN CONCRETE NEGOTIATIONS TOOK PLACE.

8. ON THE MIDDLE EAST, GROMYKO SHOWED SOME MODERATION. AS EXPECTED, HE VOICED SOVIET DISAPPROVAL OF US ACTIONS, NOTING IN PARTICULAR THAT THE SOVIETS OPPOSED STEPS WHICH THEY CONSIDER ARE DIVORCED FROM THE IDEA OF A PERMANENT SETTLEMENT. ON THE ISRAELI-EGYPTIAN AGREEMENT PER SE, HOWEVER, GROMYKO DENIED THAT THE SOVIETS WERE CONDUCTING ANY CAMPAIGN AGAINST IT. HE REPEATED THE STANDARD SOVIET

LINE ON FULL WITHDRAWAL FROM THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES BY ISRAEL, RESOLUTION OF THE PALESTINIAN QUESTION BY ALLOWING THE PALESTINIANS TO ESTABLISH THEIR OWN HOMELAND, AND GUARANTEES OF THE EXISTENCE OF ALL STATES IN THE AREA, INCLUDING ISRAEL. HE WAS NOTABLY PESSIMISTIC OVER THE POSSIBILITY OF RECONVENING THE GENEVA CONFERENCE.

9. IN SHORT, THERE WERE NO SURPRISES DURING THESE CONSULTATIONS. NO DECISIONS WERE MADE ON FUTURE MEETINGS, BUT IT IS POSSIBLE THAT THE SECRETARY WILL BE SEEING GROMYKO AGAIN THIS FALL TO DISCUSS SALT FURTHER. A DATE FOR THE BREZHNEV VISIT HAS NOT YET BEEN SET, AND IT IS UNDERSTOOD ON BOTH SIDES THAT SALT PROGRESS IS THE KEY ELEMENT IN PLANNING FOR A SUMMIT MEETING. KISSINGER

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